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ABSTRACT

The minds of people who write papers for convention proceedings are diverse and generally creative, and ideally this diversity and creativity produces papers that advance the state of the art. In format, however, a proceedings book benefits from congruity and harmony. Contributors need to use a common language and accepted patterns of communication if they are to communicate at all and if they are to communicate with mutual appreciation. This similarity in format can be accomplished when all writers use the same kind of equipment and supplies and the same guidelines for pagination, margins, divisions of content, headings, spacing, style, graphic aids, and references. Adhering to a requested format will enhance the effect of the papers--on the reviewers, on the editor, and, ultimately, on the readers in general. (HOD)

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GUIDELINES FOR PROCEEDINGS PAPERS: AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION, SOUTHEAST REGION[1]

Richard David Ramsey, Southeastern Louisiana University

ABSTRACT

Similarity in format is desirable among the papers in a volume of proceedings. This similarity can be accomplished when all writers use the same kind of equipment and supplies and the same format for pagination, margins, divisions of content, headings, spacing, style, graphic aids, and references.

INTRODUCTION

The minds of people who write papers for proceedings are diverse and generally creative, and hopefully this diversity and creativity produce content in papers which advances the state of the art. In format, nonetheless, a proceedings book benefits from congruity and harmony. People are not expected to write congruent ideas (ideological tranquillity can, after all, be tantamount to boredom and even worse things), but the contributors do need to use a common language and accepted patterns of communication if they are to communicate at all and certainly if they are to communicate with mutual appreciation. This paper describes how to put the nuts and bolts of your paper together; if you do your part in line with these instructions, your paper will stand a better chance of meriting publication in the proceedings of the conference. These instructions are divided into the following clusters of guidelines:

- Equipment and supplies
- Pagination
- Margins
- Necessary divisions
- Headings
- Spacing
- Questions of orthography, punctuation, style
- Graphic aids
- Reference system
- Neatness

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[1]Many members of ABCA and other organizations have influenced this updating of guidelines for format. The significance of Nash and Robin (1975) is rightfully acknowledged.

CS 209 087

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Your paper must be typewritten, with a carbon (nonreuseable) ribbon and a clean prestige elite element. Any fabric ribbon, including nylon, is unacceptable for the purpose, as is also any print other than prestige elite. If you need to use brackets and your prestige elite element does not have them, you should insert a delegate element for the brackets only. If your typescript includes some diacritical mark, you should carefully draw it in with black ink (do not, for example, use the apostrophe for the acute [′]).

You should submit the typewritten original of your paper on standard American letter-size 20-lb bond, measuring 8-1/2 inches horizontally and 11 inches vertically. The paper should be white (shasta) and nonerasable. Your bond will be acceptable regardless of whether it has a watermark and cotton content, but the bond must be of 20-lb weight. You should keep a copy of your paper, but only the typewritten original (not a copy) should be submitted to the proceedings editor.

PAGINATION

The maximum length of a paper acceptable for the proceedings is 10 pages single spaced. Numbering of pages will be accomplished by the proceedings editor. Please submit your typescript pages unnumbered.

MARGINS

Typescript pages should use only one side, but the proceedings will be printed on both sides and leftbound. Margins, consequently, should be set as follows:

1. The top margin on the first page should sink the title two inches from the top of the page (start on Line 13); the top margin on every page except the first page should be 1 inch (Line 7).

2. On the first page and on every odd page thereafter, the left margin should be 1-1/2 inches (in prestige elite type, start 19 spaces from the left side of the page). The right margin on these pages should be 1 inch.

3. On the second page and every second page thereafter, the left margin should be 1 inch (in prestige elite type, Space 13 from the left side of the page) and the right margin should be 1-1/2 inches.

4. The right margin should be ragged. (You are fortunate if you have a machine which will justify the right margin, but many people do not.)

5. The bottom margin on every page should be 1 inch.

You will also want to observe that material to be centered (such as first-level headings and graphic aids) needs to be centered between the margins, not at the physical center of the page.

NECESSARY DIVISIONS

You should consider your paper as developing in three segments: the frontmatter, the text, and the endmatter. There are, however, no headings as such to label frontmatter, text, or endmatter.

Frontmatter

The frontmatter consists of three items: the title, the authors, and the abstract. You should type the title as a first-level heading (see section below on HEADINGS), leave one line blank, and then center the name and employer of each author, single-spaced, as in this example:

Henry W. Nash, Mississippi State University
Donald P. Robin, Mississippi State University

You should triple-space (leave two lines blank) after the author(s), before the centered first-level heading ABSTRACT. You should triple-space (leave two lines blank) after this heading, indent eight spaces (the same indention as for all paragraphs), and type an abstract of 100 or fewer words (it's no crime to go a few words over 100, but don't make the abstract itself into a report). You should try to write an informative abstract, but since that style does not work comfortably with all topics, you may use a descriptive abstract if necessary.

Text

Like other business reports, the text of your paper should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The INTRODUCTION and the CONCLUSION should each be so labeled with first-level headings (see section below on HEADINGS).

The introduction should state the topic of the paper: what central question does the paper attempt to answer? The introduction must lead the reader into the topic. Many papers seem confused and disorganized because, in the introduction, the author plops the reader in medias res into a topic. (Remember: as the writer of a paper you are almost certain to know the topic better than most of the readers do; do not expect readers to be mindreaders.) Lesikar (1981b, pp. 104-106) and other books on report writing provide cogent guidance as to what may go into an introduction. In a conference paper (which does not, of course, have its own table of contents) a particularly useful feature in an introduction is a preview; for example, an introduction which contains the sentence Agribusiness in Sweden may be divided into the southern region, the central region, and the northern region sets the reader up to expect a body which first discusses the southern region, then the central region, and finally the northern region.

The body should flow from the introduction. The body is more likely to be intelligible to the reader if the writer composes it with some kind of outline in mind. Proper use of first- and second-level headings (see section below on HEADINGS) will enhance the reader's ability to grasp the content of the body (the body, incidentally, is understood to be a section of the paper and is not to be labeled as such). Careful transitions between the subtopics and paragraphs are also, of course, helpful; and the deliberate use of a topic sentence in each paragraph will likewise facilitate comprehension.

The conclusion may be of three types:

- A simple summary of the paper's argument (or narrative in some cases). The summary type is most useless when one considers that the paper also has an abstract.
- A conclusion as strictly defined, which names the problem(s) or situation(s) existing at present. Readers generally find this sort of ending more meaningful than they do the simple summary.
- A set of recommendations, which urge a course of action for the future. If the recommendations are extensive, they should be placed in an additional section labeled with the first-level heading RECOMMENDATIONS.

Endmatter

The appendix(es) and references comprise the endmatter. If there are two or more appendixes, they should be designated APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B, etc. Unless an appendix intervenes, alphabetically listed references should begin under a first-level heading REFERENCES after the last paragraph of the text. You should not automatically begin the list on a new page. Directions for the reference system as such are given in a separate section of this paper.

HEADINGS

Headings are of two kinds: first-level (centered in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS) and second-level (flush-left with underline and initial-letter capitalization of the first word and all other words except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions). The following rules apply:

1. Triple-space (leave two lines blank) before and after each first-level heading (with exception, as indicated earlier, that only one line is left blank between the title, which is a first-level heading, and the author[s]).
2. Double-space before and after each second-level heading.
3. Make the running prose read as if the headings are not there. Facts conveyed in a heading must be repeated in the text. Do not use

a pronoun in a paragraph to refer to a noun in a heading. A heading is like a highway sign, but is not the road itself.

4. Center each first-level heading between the margins, not at the physical center of the page (see information on margins above).

5. Remember that a heading reflects one of the points in your outline. The presence of one second-level heading under a first-level heading requires at least one other second-level heading under that first-level heading (you can't divide something into one part).

6. If a heading comes near the bottom of a page, make sure that it has at least two lines of text under it; otherwise leave the space at the bottom of that page and carry the heading to the next page. Avoid widowed lines.

7. For headings on tables and figures, see separate section on GRAPHIC AIDS below.

SPACING

The following rules govern some particulars of spacing:

1. Indent each paragraph eight spaces.

2. Space twice after any mark of punctuation which ends a sentence. Space twice after any colon used between clauses or before a list.

3. Start separated numbered items, as in these examples, at the left margin and space twice after the period following the number. If you use the bullet (•) instead of numbers, skip three spaces after it. In either case, indent subsequent lines as shown.

4. Form the dash with two hyphens and no spaces--like that.

5. In terms of lines, you should single-space <u>within</u> paragraphs and double-space <u>between</u> paragraphs (but triple-space before and after each first-level heading and double-space before and after each second-level heading).

QUESTIONS OF ORTHOGRAPHY, PUNCTUATION, STYLE

Educated people may reasonably disagree over matters of opinion in spelling, punctuation, style, etc. To assist in the coordination of the proceedings, however, authors are requested to accommodate to the following:

1. Spelling must be approved as standard by a recognized dictionary and consistent within a paper. NonAmerican authors may use British spelling, provided that this alternative is followed consistently throughout the paper.

2. All questions of punctuation are to be arbitrated by Hodges and Whitten (1982) or Ramsey (1981).

3. Bullets (•) are acceptable. Type them by striking the o and then carefully filling it in with black ink. Skip three spaces after each bullet.

4. Brackets must be typewritten. (You may need to insert a delegate element to get the brackets.)

5. Since you must write as yourself and to an audience, and since objectivity and formality are not necessarily equatable, you may use any personal pronoun which is convenient. In papers with more than one author, please restrict we, us, ours, and our to refer to the authors of the paper (not to the authors and the readers).

6. Sensitive choice of words should be accomplished wherever a sizeable portion of your audience could perceive some kind of racial or sexual bias as being codified into your language. "Sensitive choice of words" should not, however, be construed to mean informal use of they, them, theirs, or their as singulars.

7. You should hyphenate words only as sparingly as possible. (Your right margin is ragged anyway.)

8. You should avoid slang and contractions, but the occasional use of either is okay (the same goes for humor, although proceedings papers have been known to win awards while being joyless in the extreme).

GRAPHIC AIDS

Graphic aids (illustrations) should be considered as being of two kinds: tables and figures. Tables are tabular displays of information (columns, lists); figures are anything else (charts, diagrams, drawings, graphs, pictures, etc.). Before a graphic aid emerges in the paper, mention of the graphic aid must occur in the prose text. If need be, to fit on one page a graphic aid may be isolated on a page to itself and turned with the top of the graphic aid toward the reader's left. If a graphic aid runs to two or more pages, you may want to consider treating it as an appendix. The titles (captions) for both tables and figures should use initial letter capitalization of the first word and all other words except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions; the title (caption) should bear no underline. Triple-space (leave two lines blank) above and below the title of a graphic aid.

Tables

Caption any table above the table and number it in a Roman-numeral sequence, as in Table I. It is not necessary to place a border around the table.

Table I. Sample Table

???	???	???	???	???	???	???
?	?	?	?	?	?	?
?	?	?	?	?	?	?
?	?	?	?	?	?	?

Figures

Figure 1 is a sample figure. Note that the figure is captioned below the figure and numbered in an Arabic-numeral sequence.

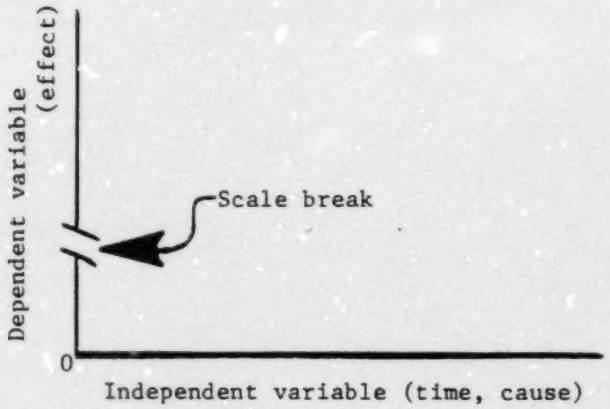

Figure 1. Sample Figure

REFERENCE SYSTEM

Application of a modern system of references can greatly enhance a paper. Since various systems are in circulation, the following guidelines are set forth to accomplish consistency within the proceedings:

1. Use footnotes only for clarification or brief discussions which are subsidiary to the text. Each footnote should go at the bottom

of the page where its corresponding superscript appears in the text.[2]

2. Cite references in the text, usually within parentheses (Surname, Year, pages), as in (Lesikar, 1981a) or (Smeltzer & Long, 1983); page numbers are cited only when needed--as, for example, with direct quotations.

3. Consolidate full bibliographic information into an alphabetical list of REFERENCES at the end of the paper. In this list, use the reference style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Third Edition (1983, pp. 118-133), with exception that you should indicate each author's given names, not just initials; also, for an item of multiple authorship you should invert (put surname first) only the name of the first author. Otherwise you should follow the APA style in all matters pertaining to the list of references.

NEATNESS

Neatness counts. Dress to look your best on paper so that the substance of what you have written gains from the cosmetic halo effect. The proceedings editor is unlikely to have either the time or the secretarial assistance to do your work for you in this regard.

CONCLUSION

A proceedings book benefits from a unified appearance. Sticking to the requested format will enhance the effect of your paper--on the reviewers, on the editor, and, ultimately, on the readers in general.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In preparing your camera-ready copy, you should do the following:

1. Adhere to these guidelines, to enhance your paper's prospects of being published and of contributing to the overall impression of the proceedings.

2. Set apart any specific conclusions or recommendations, as in this example.

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[2]Like this. And observe that the line separating the note from the text has a blank line above it and below it and consists of 18 elite spaces (1-1/2 inches).

3. Deliver the camera-ready copy to the proceedings editor in advance of the deadline.

REFERENCES

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